

Higher Education Needs in Snohomish, Island, and Skagit Counties

The 2005-2007 state capital budget directs the Higher Education Coordinating Board to evaluate higher education and workforce training needs in Snohomish, Island, and Skagit counties and recommend solutions to the Legislature and governor. The board is charged with delivering an interim report of preliminary findings by January 15, 2006, and a final report by December 1, 2006.

Specifically, the law as enacted calls for the board to do the following:

- Assess the higher education needs in Snohomish, Island and Skagit counties
- Recommend the type of institution or institutions to be created or expanded to address those needs
- Assess potential sites for an institution
- Identify costs and a process for completing a master plan for higher education expansion in the study area.

The budget directs the board to form a 13-member local advisory committee, including six state legislators, the Snohomish County executive, and two business or education leaders from each of the three counties.

Status

The consultant team has been hired and is currently conducting focus group interviews with business leaders and employers, interest groups, educational institutions and Native American leaders and educators and reviewing past studies and supporting documents. The members of the local advisory committee have been appointed and a separate technical review group, the project coordinating team, has been formed to review and discuss materials in advance of the local advisory committee meetings.

On September 7 a project leadership summit was held at Everett Community College with both groups. Upcoming meetings will focus on review of demographics, forecasts, qualitative/quantitative needs and early thoughts on role and mission, and needs analysis. Town Hall meetings with the public are tentatively scheduled to be held in each county on November 15, 16, or 17. Meeting locations have not yet been determined.

Upcoming Meetings

October 19, 2005 at Skagit Valley College, Mount Vernon – Project Coordinating Team

October 28, 2005 at Snohomish Administration Building, Everett – Local Advisory Committee

For Additional Information, Contact the Higher Education Coordinating Board:

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10/03/05

***NEW SECTION. Sec. 615 FOR THE HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD**
Snohomish, Skagit, and Island County Higher Education Needs Assessment (06-2-850)

The appropriation in this section is subject to the following conditions and limitations:

- (1) The higher education coordinating board is directed to assess the higher education needs in Snohomish, Skagit, and Island counties and recommend to the legislature solutions to the higher education needs. Solutions that the board should consider include, but should not be limited to, establishment of new institutions, expansion of existing institutions, and colocation of institutions. In conducting its assessment, the board shall take into account but not be limited to the following: Population growth, higher education participation rates, economic demand and work force needs, and drive and commute times to existing higher education institutions.
- (2) The board may contract for an assessment of sites to meet higher education needs in the counties.
- (3) In conducting the assessment and siting study, the higher education coordinating board shall consult with the state board for community and technical colleges, the workforce training and education coordinating board, the North Snohomish, Island, and Skagit higher education consortium, and the existing research and comprehensive institutions.
- ~~(4) The advisory committee on higher education created pursuant to chapter . . . (Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 5441 (studying early learning, K-12, and higher education)), Laws of 2005 shall serve as a steering committee and direct the board in the conduct of the assessment and siting study.~~
- (5) The board shall assemble a local advisory committee to assist in the conduct of the assessment and siting study. The committee shall include: (a) The Snohomish county executive; (b) three members of the house of representatives, including two from the majority party and one from the minority party, appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives; (c) three members of the senate, including two from the majority party and one from the minority party, appointed by the president of the senate; and (d) six education or business leaders, two each from Snohomish, Island, and Skagit counties.
- (6) The recommendations to the legislature shall include, but are not limited to: (a) The type of institution or institutions to be established; (b) a business and operations plan for the institution if a new institution is recommended; (c) potential sites for establishment of an institution; (d) identification of site acquisition costs; and (e) identification of costs and a process for completing a master plan for higher education expansion.
- (7) The board shall provide an interim report to the legislature and the governor by January 15, 2006, and a final report by December 1, 2006.

Appropriation:

Education Construction Account--State \$500,000

Prior Biennia (Expenditures) \$0

Future Biennia (Projected Costs) \$0

TOTAL \$500,000

**Sec. 615 was partially vetoed. See message at end of chapter.*

Veto Message

Section 615(4), page 137, Higher Education Coordinating Board was vetoed by the Governor as follows:

"Section 615(4) requires the advisory committee on higher education created in E2SB 5441 (Comprehensive Education Study) to serve as a steering committee to direct the Board in the conduct of a higher education needs assessment and siting study for Snohomish, Skagit, and Island counties. Under current statute, the Board has authority to conduct these assessments. I am directing the Board to consult with the advisory committee created in E2SB 5441 so that the advisory committee may consider the Board's findings and recommendations as it considers the higher education needs of the entire state."

